

THE TRIBUNE.

The Struggle in Rhode Island—A Connected History.

We have been favored by a friend in Providence, who was an actor in as well as witness of the late fearful encounter, with the following succinct and connected narrative of the entire collision, from the arrival of Dorr from this City down to the utter dispersion of his followers. Although it embodies few facts absolutely new, it still throws additional light on the whole affair, and cannot fail to be perused with interest. It is as follows:

To the Editor of the N. Y. Tribune.

Sir: As the events in Rhode Island for a few days past may be interesting to some of your readers, I take the liberty of sending you the following account.

It was reported in Providence on Sunday last that Dorr had returned from New-York to Stonington, Ct. and would enter the City the next day. About forty or fifty armed men of his party had charged an extra train of cars, went to meet him in order to protect him from arrest until he should arrive in Providence. It was a necessary act of prudence as they supposed, and perhaps, for the strength of the faction lay in the Northern part of the State only, the Southern was enraged at the desperate measures to which the party had at last resorted. He came safely, and was received at the depot on Monday morning by a party of his friends who, numbering about three hundred armed men and about two thousand unarmed, escort him through our principal streets to his quarters. It has, throughout the whole, been the wise policy of our Government to avoid if possible the effusion of blood. He was therefore suffered to pass unimpeached. When he arrived at his quarters he delivered the Proclamation which has gone the rounds of the newspapers, defying both the power of our State, and the whole force of the General Government, and declaring his intention to push his designs to the last extremity, and if necessary, to fight and die himself in the cause. He then dismissed the greater part of his escort, ordering them to remain under arms, and at the firing of signal guns, to repair immediately to his quarters and await orders.

During the day and night of Monday he remained inactive, a prisoner in his own house, with sword and pistols constantly upon his person, and arms on guard. On Tuesday at noon a report was spread that the authorities intended to arrest Dorr that afternoon. His signal guns were immediately fired, and his soldiers pouring from the city and country, surrounded his quarters, about three hundred strong. The rumor was probably spread by Dorr himself, who was tired of inaction, and knowing that a force scarcely equal to half his own was in the city ready to oppose him, he was anxious to make himself master of the Military stores of the State, before the Southern counties could be called out against him. No sooner had he decoyed his men in, than with an effectually screened party, he ordered fifty of them to march into the heart of the city and seize two encampments which were the property of an Independent Company, who were disaffected with the authorities, but had not joined Dorr. The band obeyed his orders, seized the guns, and dragged them to his quarters before the eyes of our citizens, some of whom were armed, and anxious for orders to retake them. Governor King did not issue the order because they were claimed as private property, and he was unwilling to spill blood on a question of simple right, reserving it until the contest should come upon the main question—rebellion so good order.

Dorr gave his commands that the guns should be loaded, and his men stand ready for immediate action—this intention was kept his operations that night by an attack on the State Arsenal. Information was immediately carried to the quarters of the Governor, who issued a Proclamation, calling upon the citizens to repair to the Arsenal, and arm themselves. The call was immediately responded to, and the street leading to the Arsenal was lined with men going and returning with loaded muskets and fixed bayonets. They took them to their homes, that they might be ready for action at the first alarm. It was a solemn sight to us who had never known what war was, to see men whom we had been in the habit of meeting daily for years, thus armed to defend their homes. And when we thought again that all this was brought upon us through the impulsive ambition of one man, and that his departure might prevent all blood shed, it seemed almost right to exonerate the wretched who was ready to drink the best blood of his fellow citizens, including, it might be, that of his own father and brother, rather than desist from his desperate course.

At two o'clock on Wednesday morning the tocsin sounded the alarm. The insurgents had broken up their encampment, and were in full march for the Arsenal, with Dorr at their head. It was defended by three City Companies, the Marine Artillery and Cadets, reinforced by citizens who were stationed within the building, and the Light Infantry, who were posted outside, in all about one hundred and fifty men, with cannon charged with grape and canister. Dorr marched his troops upon the plain, drew them up in order, and planted his cannon. He sent a flag of truce, demanding possession. Col. Leonard Blodget, who was in command, asked "For whom, and in whose name?" The answer was, "For Governor Dorr," in the name of Col. Wheeler. He said that he knew not such man, and that if they attacked the Arsenal it would be defended. When the flag returned, Dorr gave orders to fire, but his guns flashed three times. It is said that there was disaffection in his ranks, and some of his men had damaged the powder. Whatever was the cause, the hand of God was in it. One discharge would have mowed down ranks of the best young blood in our city, but Dorr would never have survived it. It is rumored that ten marksmen lay concealed with their pieces pointed at him, ready to shoot him down, so soon as a gun was discharged. Finding that it was useless to attempt the attack then, and perhaps suspecting the disaffection, he ordered his troops to return to head-quarters, clear out their guns, and prepare for action after breakfast.

Early in the morning the Mayor issued a call to the citizens to repair to one of the alarm posts around. He was promptly obeyed, by numbers of the most distinguished of our citizens—old and young—among them was one old veteran of eighty, who was so eager to carry his musket again, that the most earnest persuasion was necessary to induce him to lay it down. The troops were drawn up in order at about nine o'clock, and having been joined by about two hundred who were collected at a moment's warning from the Southern counties, it is said that the order was given to their commander, Col. Wm. Blodget, to take Dorr dead or alive in half an hour. Five hundred strong, they took up their line of march, and halting a short distance from the hill, on which the insurgents were posted, each man was refreshed with a draft of pure water.

Knowing all this, our men advanced still as the grave; not a word was said, and nothing heard but the word of command and the steady measured tramp. The thoughts of every man were spoken in his face. They were away with their wives and children, their mothers, their sisters and their betrothed. Certain death stared them in the face, and yet they were willing to sacrifice themselves and all their's at the call of duty.

When they arrived at the foot of the hill, the were divided into two detachments, one to march round, and entering the rear of Dorr's quarters, to seize him and attack his band on the flank; the other to march up in the face of his cannon, and make an attack simultaneously with the first detachment. When the order was given, two and two they steadily ascended the hill. A crowd of

spectators suddenly rushed aside to the right and left, and the way was cleared in front of the column. Steadily and still our men advanced! They reached the top of the hill and they came within the range of the cannon—a man was seen to jump outside one of them, and swearing that he had loader with him that it should be recorded on his tombstone that he was the first blood shed in such a cause! he bristled his torch aloft, and bringing it down had well nigh applied it to a charge which would have scattered death through a noble and devoted band, when a fellow-soldier, more humane or more fearful struck aside the torch and they were yet safe. Filling off at the right, the detachment receded a band which placed them a little above the opposing cannon, where it was more difficult to reach them. Their advance was still steady—not a man fell back—not a man quailed—not a man murmured.

The first detachment ascended the hill to the rear of the houses where Dorr was supposed to be. No canon were opposed to them. As they approached the house, a large body of the insurgents met them with bayonet fixed, and musket pointed. The order was given to halt and prepare to charge. Their Commander came forward, and in the name of Governor King demanded entrance to the house to search for one Dorr. Instead of making resistance they opened to the right and left and our troops rushed through and entered the house. Its owner, Burlington Anthony, asked "why he was favored with their visit?" Their answer was that they were looking for Dorr. He asked to be taken to their Commander, and when he approached, he was assured that Dorr was not in the house, having fled an hour or two before. They nevertheless insisted upon searching the house, but he was gone. Just then the other detachment arrived and posted themselves opposite the house, on the other flank of the insurgents, who had caught their canon and were retreating in the utmost disorder. They were referred to deposit without molestation, the orders of Col. Blodget having been to avoid, if possible, the effusion of blood.

Detachments were so numerous from them, that before they had reached a quarter of a mile, their number was diminished to thirty. These thirty, however, were utterly desperate. They dragged their canon to the brow of a hill nearly perpendicular, and there planting them threatened to pour out their murderous charges, if our men advanced to take them, although they knew their cause was lost, and that they exposed themselves to inevitable death. Their leaders asked a parley, and said that they were utterly unable to control their men, but if our troops were ordered off the hill they would pledge themselves to remove the canon that had been stolen, so soon as the intoxication wore off. Orders were then issued to march back, and—for God's sake! he was praised—our men returned uninjured, having accomplished a boldness which the party had at last resorted. He came safely, and was received at the depot on Monday morning by a party of his friends who, numbering about three hundred armed men and about two thousand unarmed, escort him through our principal streets to his quarters. It has, throughout the whole, been the wise policy of our Government to avoid if possible the effusion of blood. He was therefore suffered to pass unimpeached. When he arrived at his quarters he delivered the Proclamation which has gone the rounds of the newspapers, defying both the power of our State, and the whole force of the General Government, and declaring his intention to push his designs to the last extremity, and if necessary, to fight and die himself in the cause. He then dismissed the greater part of his escort, ordering them to remain under arms, and at the firing of signal guns, to repair immediately to his quarters and await orders.

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Thus the matter rests. It is generally believed that Dorr, upon giving out that he will never return to the State, has been supplied with funds to leave the Country and remain abroad. If it should not prove so, his return will be the harbinger of wo to him and his adherents; for the whole State is in arms and the feeling is one of deep execration against the traitor.

Dr. Dorr gave his commands that the guns should be loaded, and his men stand ready for immediate action—this intention was kept his operations that night by an attack on the State Arsenal. Information was immediately carried to the quarters of the Governor, who issued a Proclamation, calling upon the citizens to repair to the Arsenal, and arm themselves. The call was immediately responded to, and the street leading to the Arsenal was lined with men going and returning with loaded muskets and fixed bayonets. They took them to their homes, that they might be ready for action at the first alarm. It was a solemn sight to us who had never known what war was, to see men whom we had been in the habit of meeting daily for years, thus armed to defend their homes. And when we thought again that all this was brought upon us through the impulsive ambition of one man, and that his departure might prevent all blood shed, it seemed almost right to exonerate the wretched who was ready to drink the best blood of his fellow citizens, including, it might be, that of his own father and brother, rather than desist from his desperate course.

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